



Photo courtesy Bulk Fuel Co. A

# NCO initiative

**Cpl. Stephen L. Standifird**

Marine Forces Reserve, New Orleans

**MARANA, Ariz.** — One of the Marine Corps' newest noncommissioned officers was watching the news and saw that a Marine Corps aircraft crashed 15 miles northwest of Tucson, Ariz., on April 8.

He took the initiative to get dressed in his uniform and report to the senior Marine present.

The Marine Corps encountered this devastating loss when an MV-22 Osprey crash claimed the lives of 19 Marines on board at the Avra Valley Airport, Marana, Ariz.

Following the accident, Marines on the ground were getting the area cleared and ready for an investigation when out of the crowd stepped a Marine who simply said, "My name is Cpl. Bowers from 6<sup>th</sup> Engineer Support Battalion. How can I help you?"

Cpl. Todd B. Bowers, a Washington, D.C., native, who found out about the crash on the news, changed into a set of camouflaged utilities, donned a utility belt and canteens and drove to the site to see how he could help.

Bowers, who was promoted to corporal just hours before arriving at the

scene, took his commanding officer's words to heart at his promotion about being in a leadership position now, and this was his time to shine.

"This is definitely something I'd expect out of a Marine of Bowers' caliber," said Capt. Thomas M. Pratt, the Inspector-Instructor for Bulk Fuel Co. A.

The first call Bowers, a student at the University of Arizona, made was to Tucson, Ariz., native Gunnery Sgt. Russell Godoy, operations officer for Bulk Fuel Co. A, who made a call to the commanding officer and passed on the information.



Official USMC photo

**The MV-22 Osprey is the plane that went down near Bower's home in Tucson, Ariz., when he volunteered his time to help at the crash site.**

Upon Co. A Commanding Officer, Maj. Dennis D. Harkins' arrival, he found two of his Marines already on the scene.

Word was passed. Marines were needed. Harkins passed his recall roster to Bowers who pulled out his personal cellular phone and started

calling other Marines from the unit to help out.

Bowers said it was hard getting a hold of Marines from his unit because they were training in the field the night

before and had little sleep.

By the time active duty Marines from Marine Corps Air Station Yuma, Ariz.,

arrived to relieve the security crew, 17 Marines from Bulk Fuel Co. A had made their way to the crash site and were helping out.

Together with the Marines from MCAS Yuma, four guard posts were established around the site, and a rotation schedule was in action.

To further show their dedication to the Marine Corps and those involved, Bulk Fuel Co. A supplied a total of 42 volunteers who assisted in the security detail on their own time.

"I personally missed a whole week of school," Bowers said. "And I know some Marines missed a week of work."

"No one called us out to do this; the Marines did this on their own," Harkins said.

The Marines of Bulk Fuel Co. A answered the 911 call, and in the depths of the situation, displayed what it means to be

"a Band of Brothers."

